



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# Veteran Connection

VA Portland Health Care System Newsletter

**Keeping the Promise - Advancing Excellence**



## VA Portland Health Care System

3710 SW U.S. Veterans Hospital Rd.  
Portland, OR 97239

503-220-8262 | 800-949-1004

Produced by the VAPORHCS  
Public Affairs Office

**QUESTIONS / COMMENTS ??**

Please email us at...

[VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov](mailto:VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov)

or call 503-402-2975

### *Lincoln's Promise (VA Mission Statement)*

*"To care for him who  
shall have borne the  
battle, and for his  
widow, and his  
orphan" by serving  
and honoring the men  
and women who are  
America's Veterans.*

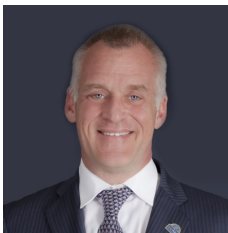
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For [VAPORHCS Events and  
Classes](#)—got to the VAPORHCS  
Web page...

[www.portland.va.gov/calendar.asp](http://www.portland.va.gov/calendar.asp)

## Message from the Director



Michael W. Fisher  
Director, VA Portland  
Health Care System

Happy New Year! With  
the change of the year  
also comes a change in  
the way we at

VAPORHCS will provide care.

I am very pleased to announce that  
VAPORHCS is one

of 18 VA facilities  
selected to be a  
"Whole Health  
Flagship Site."

Whole Health, also  
known as

"Personalized, Proactive, Patient-driven  
Care," is an approach to health care that  
empowers and equips people to take  
charge of their health and well-being and to  
live their life to the fullest. The Whole  
Health System includes conventional  
treatment, but also focuses on self-  
empowerment, self-healing, and self-care.  
This model emphasizes self-care in the  
larger context of well-being, where  
the partnership between Veterans and VA  
staff is a core part of this model. The  
Whole Health System moves VA forward  
from focusing on episodic care to a more  
continuous engagement with the Veteran  
throughout his or her life. The Whole  
Health System model is the current vision  
for complementary and integrative health  
(CIH) integration across the VA.

Our journey, as part of this Whole Health  
Flagship process, is just starting and runs  
until September 2021. To kick this off, just  
this month, about 80 VAPORHCS leaders  
participated in two days of Whole Health  
training; organizational understanding of  
the components of Whole Health and  
support implementation is key to its



success. We are also in the process of hiring  
several staff who will serve in Education  
Champion roles for both staff and Veterans  
alike in inpatient and outpatient areas in  
facilities across our health care system.

As we move through this process I will be  
sure to keep you apprised of our progress  
through communication in future  
newsletters, [social media](#), and the  
[VAPORHCS web site](#).

A very important aspect of my job is to hear  
and discuss ideas, issues and concerns with  
our Veterans so we can take a critical look at  
the way we do business. With this feedback  
we do make changes where we can and  
appropriate to ensure we are providing the  
best care and Veteran experience possible.  
We at VAPORHCS gain feedback through  
a variety of ways including; communication  
through our [Office of Veteran Experience/  
Patient Advocates](#) and service-level  
advocates; letters; email; congressional  
correspondence; [White House VA Hotline](#);  
[VA National Inquiry Routing & Information  
System \(IRIS\)](#); VA Portland Town Halls/  
community meetings; and our very active  
VAPORHCS Veterans Service  
Organization/Officer Committee and  
Veterans & Family Advisory Board. For  
more information on any one of these  
opportunities, please reach out to my [Public  
Affairs Office](#). The next Veteran community  
meeting/Town Hall I have scheduled is for  
Feb. 22 in Astoria. More details are in this  
newsletter. I plan on hosting other such  
events in Newport, Salem and Bend in the  
next few months. Watch our [web site](#) and  
[Facebook](#) page for the details. I hope to see  
you there.

Thank you for your service and for letting us  
serve you.

Michael Fisher

Winter 2018

Volume 5, Issue 1

If you would like to be added to the VAPORHCS Partner email list, please email us at [VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov](mailto:VHAPOR-PublicAffairs@med.va.gov)



## - Starting February 13, 2018 -

### Full room service for inpatient Veterans in Portland...

### “Veterans Cuisine, Choice Offerings”

VAPORHCS Nutrition & Food Services (NFS) is proud to announce they have begun the last few steps toward a full room service program for inpatient Veterans in the Portland VA Medical Center.

Transitioning from a prepare-in-advance “cook-chill” system, starting Feb. 13,

#### Benefits of the new VAPORHCS Veterans Cuisine...

- Food service for in-patients
- More than 20 food entrée choices;
  - ♦ Five grilled entrées
  - ♦ Five salad entrées
  - ♦ Eight ‘House Specials’
  - ♦ Multiple sandwiches & wraps
  - ♦ New side dishes & desserts
  - ♦ ... & more.
- Reduced sodium and fat content
- Fewer ingredients = fewer allergens
- Improved nutritional value
- Reduced waste = reduced cost

PVAMC will offer a new “Veterans Cuisine, Choice Offerings” cook-to-order menu service to inpatients between 6:30 a.m. to 7:00

p.m. every day. All meals will be prepared fresh by the VAPORHCS Culinary Team using new menu items delivered directly to the Veterans.

Enhanced dining options were launched at the 132-bed Vancouver VA Campus in August 2017, and met with very positive reviews by patients. In addition, staff report improved job satisfaction being able to provide improved service and high quality food to the Veterans they serve as well as enabling them to reduce waste and food costs.

The change was a several-year process requiring budget approvals, remodeling, new equipment purchases, hiring staff, training, menu development, and logistical planning. This was done while still providing uninterrupted food service for Veterans at the Vancouver and Portland facilities.



Nutrition & Food Services Chef John Presto (Army Veteran) cooking in the PVAMC kitchen.



BBQ Chicken Salad



Spaghetti and House-Made Meatballs



Puréed BBQ Chicken





# FEDERAL REGISTER

The Daily Journal of the United States Government

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[Facebook page!](#)



## **Notice of Request for Information on VA** **Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers** **(PCAFC)**

### **Respond by February 5, 2018**

Through [PCAFC](#), VA provides certain medical, travel, training, and stipend benefits to designated family caregivers of eligible veterans and service members who were seriously injured in the line of duty on or after September 11, 2001. This notice requests information and comments from interested parties to help inform PCAFC of any changes needed to increase consistency across the program, as well as ensure it supports those family caregivers of veterans service members most in need. We want to hear from caregivers, Veterans, Veteran Service Organizations, Military Service Organizations, community partners, and others who are committed to supporting the nation-wide network of caregivers. Share your ideas and thoughts about the PCAFC by commenting on the notice published in the [Federal Register](#) and provide your comments on the specific questions posted in the notice. Your input will be used to help inform program improvements, increase consistency across the program, and ensure support for the caregivers of eligible Veterans who are most in need.

-VAPORHCS-

## **Pharmacy hours change at PVAMC starting February 4**

**Mon. — Wed. — Thrs. — Fri.**

**7:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**Tues.**

**9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.**

**Weekends**

**8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**

**Holidays**

**8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

### **PVAMC Pharmacy helpful facts**

- PVAMC Outpatient Pharmacy is open 365 days a year.
- PVAMC fills 1,100 Rx/day; an additional 3,000 Rx/day are processed and sent to the VA Consolidated Mail Outpatient Pharmacy (CMOP)
- Serves ~300 Veterans/day at the Pharmacy window.
- Busiest time of the day is 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- Statistically, no single day of the week is busier than any other day. Sometimes the day after an Federal Holiday can be pretty busy and wait times may be longer than average due to the volume.



VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration

# Opioid overdose can happen.

Even when you take your  
medications as prescribed



## Know your risk.



Veterans are two times more likely to die  
from an opioid overdose.



Half of those who overdose on opioids are  
also taking benzodiazepines.

For example: diazepam, lorazepam, alprazolam



Mixing opioids with alcohol increases your  
risk.



### Protect yourself.

Ask your provider how to reduce your risk.

For more information visit:  
[www.visn20.med.va.gov/VISN20/services/pain/](http://www.visn20.med.va.gov/VISN20/services/pain/)



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# ***Managing Chronic Pain and Suffering: A Resource Workshop***

**When: February 13, 2018 – 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**Where: PVAMC, Building 101, Room 201**

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration

VA Portland Health Care System

**Do you live with chronic pain? Join us to hear about the many resources available at Portland VA to help you manage chronic pain and increase your quality of life.**

**Presenters will include experts in:**

Pain Medicine	Medications	Complementary Medicine
CBT for Chronic	Nutrition	Movement Therapies
Sleep	Yoga/Tai Chi	Stress Management

**You will learn about multiple evidence-based approaches to reduce your pain-related distress and will leave with a plan of action to improve your daily life.**

**For more information or to sign up, call Dr. Timothy Wright  
At 503-220-8262 Ext. 55612**

Program offered by NW Pain Clinic &  
Primary Care - Mental Health Integration (PCMHI)



Please share  
on Facebook

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**VA**

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration  
Office of Research & Development

# — The ‘CART’ Research Study —

## Participate in a study exploring how technology supports the aging process.

The **Collaborative Aging** (in Place) **Research using Technology (CART)** project uses technology to assess activity in a home, with the hope of helping people remain independent as they age. By participating in this three-year long study, you'll be contributing to the development of future devices that aim to increase the quality of life of older adults who may live far from medical clinics and hospitals.

### You may be eligible if you:

- Live independently or with a partner
- Are at least 62 years old
- Are a veteran

### What is Involved:

- Continuous measurement of activity patterns, by using motion sensors placed in your
- home and devices like a digital watch, scale and pillbox.
- In-home physical and cognitive assessments
- Compensation is provided at \$100 per month

**How the technology Works:** After undergoing a screening process, researchers will install motion sensors in each room of the subject's home, as well as devices like a digital watch, scale and pillbox. These sensors and devices are sensitive to a person's presence and can continuously measure home-based activity in real-time.

Using an internet connection, data from these devices is sent securely to the research team's servers. Innovative algorithms can translate the raw data into meaningful information.

The sensors are discreet and the devices do not interfere with daily life, meaning that the participant does not need to change their daily routines.

**For more information: Contact study coordinator...**

Rachel Wall — Email: [Rachel.Wall@va.gov](mailto:Rachel.Wall@va.gov) , Phone: 503-468-7178



## Women Veterans - VAPORHCS wants to hear from you!

**Attention Women Veterans:** We want to hear from you about your experiences at VA Portland Health Care System to help improve our services.

**A focus group is scheduled to hear your feedback:**

**Saturday, February 3rd, 1:30 - 4 p.m.      Topic: Outpatient Care**

**To register,** please contact Ms. Jimmie Samuels at **(503) 220-8262 ext. 58630**.

Other details will be provided when you register.

If you are interested in providing feedback but unable to make it at these times, please leave your name so we can contact you for future focus groups.

-VAPORHCS-

Please help us by sharing this opportunity via Facebook



-VAPORHCS-





## Self Referral now offered for Podiatry, Nutrition Services, and Amputee/Wheelchair Clinics

Podiatry, Nutrition Services, and Amputee/Wheelchair clinics can all now see patients by Self-Referral, meaning they do not need a consult placed to be able to see a provider in one of these areas. In the community, depending on a person's insurance they may or may not need a referral to see a specialist. This option reduces the number of times a Veteran has to physically travel to a clinic since they do not need to see their PCP first and it gives them the ability to seek the care they need at the time they need it, with the goal of improving Veteran satisfaction and their health.

<b>What are the changes</b> <b>Why is it important for our Veterans?</b>	<b>How to contact or direct dial number</b>
<p><b>Podiatry</b> – does the Veteran have new foot pain or open wounds on feet? They can call the Specialty Call Center and be referred directly to the Podiatry service for scheduling. The Veteran no longer needs to go through their PCP to have a consult entered.</p> <p><b>Nutrition Services</b> – If a Veteran would like to see a dietitian, they can call the NFS direct dial number to be scheduled. The Veteran no longer needs to go through their PCP or Specialist to have a consult entered.</p> <p><b>Amputee clinic</b> – for our Veterans who are missing a body part, they can call or come by the clinic to be scheduled. No consult needed.</p> <p><b>Wheelchair clinic</b> – for Veterans in need of a wheelchair, power wheelchair/scooter they can call or come by the clinic to be scheduled. No consult needed.</p>	<p><b>Podiatry</b> – through the Specialty Call Center, (503) 220-8262 ext. 50820</p> <p><b>Nutrition Services</b> – (503) 273-5112</p> <p><b>Amputee &amp; Wheelchair clinics</b> – (503) 273-5018</p>



# VA Veteran Listening Sessions/Community Meetings in Astoria and Newport

**WHAT?** VAPORHCS and VBA Portland Regional Office Directors are hosting a Veteran listening session/community meeting to hear from Veterans about issues, concerns and ideas so we can work on improving the care and services we provide to the Veterans in the community.

**FOR WHO?** Veterans, family members and media representatives are invited.

## Astoria

**WHEN?** Feb. 22, 2018; 10:00 -11:30 a.m. (Please share [via the web](#) or [Facebook](#))



**WHERE?** American Legion Post 12, basement/dining hall, 1132 Exchange St.,  
Astoria, OR 97103



## Newport

**WHEN?** March 13, 2018; 12:00 -1:30 p.m. (Please share [via the web](#) or [Facebook](#))



**WHERE?** American Legion Post 116, 424 W Olive St, Newport, OR 97365

